

PART 306-6-Official Visas

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306-6.1 What is a visa?

A visa is a stamp affixed in a passport which allows you to enter and exit a foreign country.

306-6.2 What lead-time requirements does the NOAA Travel Office require for processing visa(s) for official travel?

Lead-time requirements for processing visas for official travel are dictated by the various embassies. Six to seven working days lead-time is required to process visas for most countries. Fifteen days lead-time is required to obtain visas for China and Russia, and 2 months lead-time is required to obtain visas for Cuba.

306-6.3 How do I obtain a visa(s) in my official passport?

You will submit your official passport and any applicable visa documentation to the NTO for processing. Visa requirements vary for each country. Some countries may require a visa application, and some may require visa photos or letters of invitation. Most countries require that the passport be valid at least 6 months or longer beyond the dates of travel before a visa can be issued.

306-6.4 Is there a listing I should use when verifying visa requirements for official travel?

Yes. You will use the “Visa Requirements for Official Travel” listing when verifying visa requirements for official travel. Do not use the “Foreign Entry Requirements” listing published by the Department of State. “Foreign Entry Requirements” provides visa requirements for personal and private industry travel and differs from the visa requirements for official travel.

See NTR, Chapter 306-7.3 for the “Visa Requirements for Official Travel.”

306-6.5 Where do I obtain visa applications for official travel?

Current visa applications can be found at <http://www.traveldocs.com/> or may be obtained at the NTO by calling (301) 413-3060.

306-6.6 How do I read the “Visa Requirements for Official Travel” listing?

You should note the following when reading the “Visa Requirements for Official Travel:”

- 1) **“No visa required”** indicates the employee travels on their official passport only; and
- 2) **“Visa required”** indicates a visa is required, but applications and pictures are not required. When a visa is required, the NTO will submit applicable paperwork with the official passport to the appropriate embassy for a visa; and

Original signatures are required on each visa application.